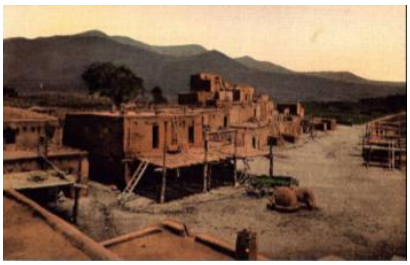
New Mexico Genealogy Research

History

Pueblo Dwellers:



Many people living in present-day New Mexico at the time that the Spanish began exploring there lived in communities of above-ground pueblos, growing corn and other vegetables and hunting game for meat. There were pueblo villages along the Rio Grande valley and in the Chama River valley, Taos area, and Galisteo Basin. The Tewa village of Ohkay Owingeh was located near the confluence of the Rio Grande and the Rio Chama.

The agricultural pueblo-dwellers may have been of Anasazi or Chaco origin. They developed crafts of pottery-making and basket-weaving. The Taos pueblo dwellers became skilled artisans in leather-working, fashioning boots, moccasins, garments, and drums.

By the 1500's, the Mansos tribes inhabited the El Paso and Mesilla Valley region.

The Pueblo of Isleta was a village of Tigua/Tiwa people located about 10 miles south of present-day Albuquerque.

Other native peoples who had been conquered by the Spanish began inhabiting pueblos in the 1800's. They included the Piros, Tompiros, Tiwas, Tanos and Jemez tribes.

Pueblo dwellers alternately traded and fought with plains tribes.

The Athabascans:

By the 1400's, Navajo and Apache groups had migrated from Canada to the Pecos River Valley. Their groups included the Chiricahua, Lipan, Mescalero, Plains, Western, White Mountain, and Jicarilla tribes. The Jicarilla Apache established adobe villages, farmed small, irrigated fields, and continued hunting bison. They had frequent contact with the Pueblo tribes and later with the Spanish settlements of northern New Mexico.

The Navajo adopted horses and sheep from the Spanish and became herders. Though they farmed, their lives increasingly centered on the movement of their sheep herds to grazing areas in summer and in winter. They traded with the Pueblos for food, exchanging meat and hides for corn and other produce. Their sacred mountains were in what is now the Four Corners Area and beyond. They joined with the Pueblo people during the period of struggle with the Spanish, retreating to hidden sites far from the settlers and sharing living quarters and defense.

Spanish settlement:

The first Europeans to explore present-day New Mexico were the Spanish. In 1598, they settled in the Tewa village of Ohkay Owingeh at the confluence of the Rio Grande and the Rio Chama and renamed the village San Juan.

The Spanish settled the city of Santa Fe at the base of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains in 1609. The San Miguel Chapel built in Santa Fe in 1610 is the oldest church structure in the U. S. today.

Spanish oppression of Pueblo peoples stirred several unsuccessful revolts during the 1600s. The strife culminated in a massive, coordinated revolt by pueblo peoples in August 1680, which forced hundreds of Spanish colonists and officials to retreat south along the Rio Grande to El Paso.

Then in 1700, the Spanish regained control of the area.

In 1706, they founded Albuquerque from surrounding communities.

As Spanish settlers continued to move into Navajo homelands in the 1700's, the Navajos raided Spanish and Pueblo villages alike, creating a period of conflict toward the end of the century.

The Spanish remained in control until the early 1800's.

Mexican ownership:
In 1821, Mexico fought Spain, achieved independence and began governing New Mexico.
Mexico established trade with the United States along the Santa Fe Trail. Later, the Santa Fe Trail became a favorite route of people heading to the California gold fields.
U. S. Territories:
In 1848, Mexico ceded New Mexico to the U. S. after it's defeat in the Mexican-American War.
Between 1846 and 1849, the United States government established treaties with the Navajos in an unsuccessful attempt to stop Navajo raids.
Congress created the New Mexico Territory September 9, 1850. It included parts of what are now Arizona, New Mexico and Colorado. Socorro, San Miguel, Taos, Rio Arriba, Valencia, Santa Fe, Doña Ana and Bernalillo Counties were formed in 1852.
In 1857, a law prohibited free blacks and mulattos from living in New Mexico Territory.
In 1861, the creation of the Colorado Territory reduced the size of New Mexico Territory. During the Civil War, the Confederacy claimed the southern tract of New Mexico Territory as Confederate Arizona Territory. However, the Confederacy was defeated in the Battle of Glorieta Pass in 1862 and the area returned to U.S. possession.
In 1863, Congress created the Arizona Territory from part of New Mexico Territory.
Also in 1863, Gen. James S. Carleton implemented a successful "scorched earth" policy to defeat Navajo forces. The Navajos who did not surrender were forced to walk over 300 miles to Bosque Redondo Reservation, an internment camp along the Pecos River in eastern New Mexico.
Then in 1868, the U.S. - Navajo Treaty was signed, which allowed the Navajo to return to a smaller portion of their original homeland mountains in Arizona and in New Mexico.
In 1886, the Apache Wars ended when Geronimo surrendered to Brigadier General Nelson Miles. The Apache people were sent to reservations in Arizona, New Mexico and Oklahoma.
Railroads:
The first operational railroad, the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway, entered New Mexico Territory via the Raton Pass in 1878. The Southern Pacific Railroad came in through the Arizona Territory in 1880 while the Denver & Rio Grande Railway came in through Colorado. The railroads stimulated European settlement in eastern and southern New Mexico. Conflicting land claims between ranchers, homesteaders and the old Spanish families were finally settled by 1904.
U.S. Statehood:
New Mexico became a state on January 6, 1912.

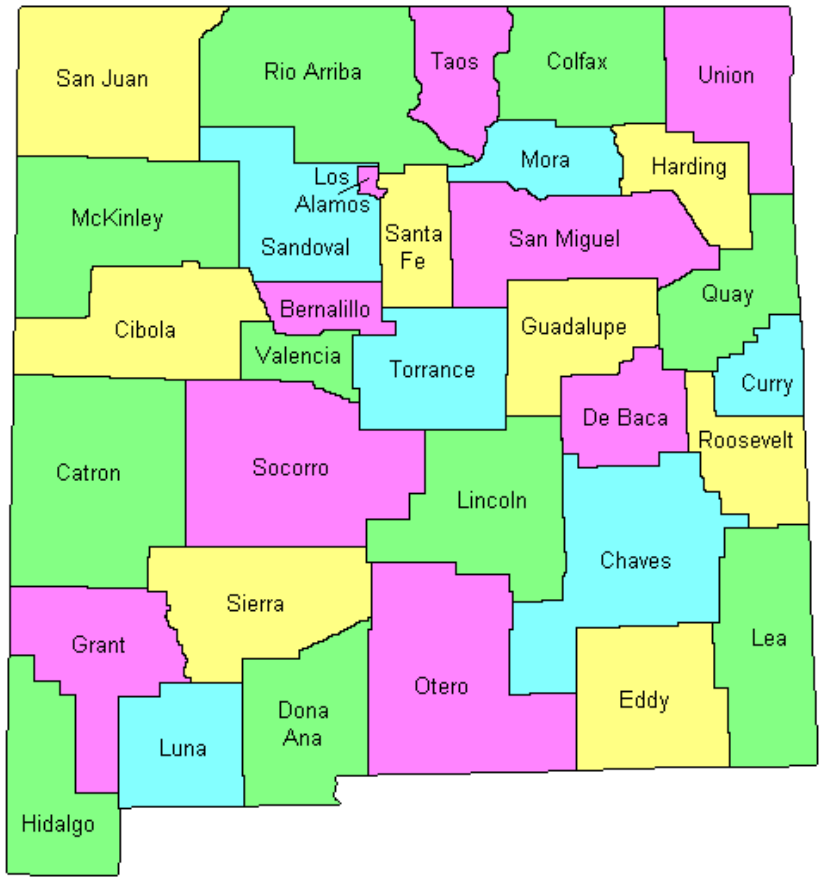
New Mexico Vital Records
Online Indexes/Images
Ancestry.com - church and county marriage databases
FamilySearch.org - databases of birth, marriage and death records, church and government, some beginning in 1700's - images of microfilmed birth, marriage and death records, church, government, cemetery, some as early as 1700's
New Mexico, U.S., Civil Records of New Spain, 1621-1821 - digitized colonial records on *Ancestry.com*
New Mexico Death Index Project (1899-1949) - transcriptions of death records - *US GenWeb*
Marriage & Prenuptial Investigations - 3 separate collections containing pdf views of books containing transcriptions of prenuptial investigations of brides and grooms by the Catholic Church in certain areas of New Mexico, dated mid-1700's to late 1800's -https://www.nmgs.org/nmgs-eresearch-reseources

Marriage and Divorce Records
Obtain a marriage record from the County Clerk of the county which issued the marriage license.
Obtain a divorce record from the office of the county District Court where the divorce ruling was made.

Birth and Death Records
Many churches in New Mexico registered births and deaths of members beginning in the colonial era. View digitized colonial church records on *New Mexico, U.S., Civil Records of New Spain, 1621-1821,* a database on *Ancestry.com.* View multiple databases and unindexed microfilm images of birth and death records created by churches beginning in the 1700's on *FamilySearch.org*.
Beginning In 1907 each territorial county in New Mexico was required to keep birth and death records. Records dating from the 1880s are available for a few counties. All of these records have been sent to the NMDOH Vital Records Division in Albuquerque.
The state required registration of all births and deaths in 1919. By 1930, compliance was near 100%.

Obtain Copies:
Some New Mexico **County Public Health Offices** have **birth records**. Get links to the websites of county Public Health Offices on NMDOH website - https://www.nmhealth.org/location/public/
Obtain copies of **state birth and death records** from the **Albuquerque DOH Vital Records Division** and from the **Santa Fe DOH Bureau of Vital Records**.
Copies of **death certificates** for some residents dated 1907 - 1950 are available at the **Albuquerque Public Library**.
NOTE: New Mexico Birth Records are restricted for 100 years; death records for 50.

New Mexico Counties



The Atlas of Historical County Boundaries – Interactive maps and text covering the historical boundaries, names, organization, and attachments of every county, includes extinct counties and unsuccessful county proposals 1850 - 2000. - earliest counties were territorial, statehood began in 1912 - http://publications.newberry.org/ahcbp/index.html

Migration Routes

Butterfield Overland Mail - California Trail - Camino Real de Tierra Adentro - Great Trail - Mohawk or Iroquois Trail - Old Spanish Trail - Santa Fe Trail - Canadian River - Cimarron River - Colorado River - Pecos River - Red River - Rio Grand - Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad - Atlantic and Pacific Railroad - Southern Pacific Railroad - Texas and Pacific Railway

Get more information on *familysearch.org; Research WIKI*, topic: New Mexico Migration Routes

Migration through the Plains States:
http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~tqpeiffer/Documents/Ancestral%20Migration%20Archives/Migration%20Webpage%20Folder/Central%20Plains%20States%20Routes.htm

New Mexico Land and Property

Land Grants

The first land grants in New Mexico were given by Spain and Mexico. When the United States acquired the area in 1848, claims relating to Spanish and Mexican grants were processed by the U.S. Surveyor General from 1855 to 1890, and by the U. S. Court of Private Land Claims from 1891 to 1903.

Various microfilms of early land grant records are located in the Family History Library, Salt Lake City; they have not been digitized. Check *Ancestry.com* for databases of early Spanish land grants.

Public Domain Land Sales

The U.S. Congress passed various laws regarding the distribution of unclaimed land in the public domain when New Mexico became a U. S. Territory. These laws created many types of land grants. The land was sold in land offices beginning in 1858 at Santa Fe.

The land entry case files, indexes to pre-1908 patents, and original tract books and township plats of the general land offices are at the National Archives.

The patents and copies of the tract books and township plats are at the Bureau of Land Management, New Mexico State Office.

BLMGLO - https://glorecords.blm.gov/ - online index to land patents in New Mexico - online index and digital images of the original survey maps for New Mexico. The patent search usually provides a digital image of the original patent.

Private Land Sales

After land was transferred to private ownership, subsequent records, including land sales, deeds and mortgages, were recorded by the county clerks. Obtain copies from county clerk offices.

Archives - Research Centers - Societies

Albuquerque Genealogical Society

Hispanic Genealogical Research Center of New Mexico - The *Great New Mexico Pedigree Database*

New Mexican Hispanic Culture Preservation League

New Mexico Genealogical Society

New Mexico State Records Center and Archives - variety of genealogical records on microfilm

The Genealogy Center, Albuquerque Main Library - vital records, church records, county records, etc.

University of New Mexico, Special Collections

More societies are listed on the *FamilySearch Research WIKI* - topic: New Mexico Societies - https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/New_Mexico_Societies

New Mexico Genealogy Websites

Diligencias Matrimoniale 1678-1869 - prenuptial marriage agreements - https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/cswr_reference/5/

Great New Mexico Pedigree Database - Webtrees - one connected genealogical family tree of New Mexico's Hispanic ancestry - sign in and use advanced search to find the person you are looking for

Online New Mexico Death Records & Indexes - links to websites publishing indexes/images of death records

New Mexico Death Index Project - indexes of deaths statewide - www.usgwarchives.net/nm/deaths.htm

New Mexico Digital Collections – family histories, maps, photographs, oral histories - http://econtent.unm.edu/

New Mexico Genealogical Society - digitized records - church - marriage - wills - land grants - burials and death records - maps - history - https://www.nmgs.org/nmgs-eresearch-reseources

New Mexico Obituary Archives - $ - https://www.obitsarchive.com/obituaries/usa/new-mexico?kbid=9064

Rocky Mountain Online Archive - finding aids, detailed descriptions of primary source materials located at twenty-seven different repositories in Colorado, New Mexico, and Wyoming - https://rmoa.unm.edu /

Western States Marriage Index – marriages in 12 counties in New Mexico for varying years of the 1800's and the 1900's plus some early 1700's marriages are being added now - http://abish.byui.edu/specialCollections/westernStates/aboutWesternStates.cfm

New Mexico African American Research

AfricaMap – track the slave trade with historical overlays and geographical data - http://worldmap.harvard.edu/africamap/

AfriGeneas – slave records, death and marriage records, censuses, surnames – chat or send messages to other researchers - http://afrigeneas.com/

International African American Museum - African American funeral programs, obituaries, marriage records, photos, historical documents and family histories – military records of the U.S. Colored Troops are currently being digitized - https://cfh.iaamuseum.org/records/

Last Seen: Finding Family After Slavery - search thousands of "Information Wanted" advertisements taken out by former slaves in all states searching for family members lost by sale, flight, or enlistment – the collection currently includes newspapers from 1853 to 1911 - http://www.informationwanted.org/

Slave Voyages - the *Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database* documents vessels along the Atlantic slave routes from 1514 to 1866; *Intra-American Slave Trade Database* documents vessels traveling between the Atlantic and Pacific ports ranging from the United States to Brazil; the *African Names Database* gives names, ages, possible origins of slaves liberated from captured slave ships between 1808 and 1862 - https://www.slavevoyages.org/

New Mexico Cemetery Research

Aztec Cemetery – SAN JUAN COUNTY - alphabetical listing of burials, includes ashes interred - http://www.azteccemetery.org/interments.html

Hidalgo County Cemeteries – alpha burial listings of 10 cemeteries - http://www.hidalgocounty.org/index.php/about/cemeteries/

Mogollon Cemetery – CATRON COUNTY - list of burials includes names, dates of birth and death, tombstone plot #, inscription and photo, description and drawing of marker, condition of the plot, and biography of the deceased, if known - http://www.mogollonenterprises.com/database.html

New Mexico Military Research

Grand Army of the Republic Records Project – developing database - histories of posts, reports of officers and members if available, search by state - http://suvcw.org/garrecords/

Fatal Casualties of the Korean War: New Mexico -
https://www.archives.gov/files/research/military/korean-war/casualty-lists/nm-alpha.pdf

Fatal Casualties of the Vietnam War: New Mexico -
https://www.archives.gov/files/research/military/vietnam-war/casualty-lists/nm-alpha.pdf

New Mexico Native American Research

First People - Links to State Recognized Tribes, sorted by state - http://www.firstpeople.us/FP-Html-Links/state-recognized-tribes-in-usa-by-state.html

Native Languages of the Americas: Native American Cultures: type the name of a state in the search bar for information about indigenous peoples living in that area – http://www.native-languages.org/home.htm

Above information courtesy of:

"About New Mexico; Native Americans" - https://www.sos.state.nm.us/about-new-mexico/new-mexico-history/native-americans/

FamilySearch.org - Research WIKI - New Mexico Genealogy Research

"International Vital Records Handbook" by Thomas Jay Kemp - New Mexico

"New Mexico Tribes; History Rooted in Spanish Conquest" by Diana Alba Soular; AlbuquerqueJournal - https://www.abqjournal.com/747222/nm-tribes-history-rooted-in-spanish-conquest.html

"Northern Rio Grande National Heritage Area; Northern New Mexico History" - https://riograndenha.org/History_and_Culture/Northern_New_Mexico_History/index.html